

**Memorial Town Hall, 1 Library Street, Georgetown, MA 01833**

**Ph. (978) 352-5755 □ Fax (978) 352-5727**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES**

**Memorial Town Hall**

**10/18/2021**

**7:00PM-General Meeting**

**Verizon channel 42/Comcast channel 9**

---

**Selectmen Present:** *D. Dawes, Chair, Vice Chair P. Kershaw, D. Twiss, A. Smith and G. Fowler.*

**Others Present:** *Michael Farrell, Town Administrator and Administrative Assistant, Maureen Shultz, Thom Berube, Town Assessor.*

---

**7:00PM Call to order**

*Invocation-Douglas W. Dawes*

*Pledge of Allegiance*

**FY 2022 TAX ASSESSMENT HEARING:**

*Thom Berube, Town Assessor addressed the Board in the Public Meeting /Tax Assessment: Not be allowed by the DOR if the Board decides a rate (Commercial rates shift the tax levy burden to commercial; properties, one decision you need to make less than 10% at this time with commercial properties, fairly high tax bill from the start.*

*D. Dawes asked if the Town's commercial & Industrial tax base has gone up, asked about property value. T. Berube, Town Assessor used the newly renovated CVS Pharmacy as an example with their new apartments added, expanded a little for commercial properties.*

*D. Twiss spoke on not the possibility of not following the DOR and the Town Assessors recommendation because if we did not follow that the state would likely kick it back to the Town to do over again.*

**RESIDENTIAL EXEMPTION:**

*The Board of Selectman may adopt a residential exemption of up to 20% to shift the residential Class tax burden. The adoption of 20% would decrease all residential property by \$88,286 in value. This exemption will increase the tax rate by \$2.82 for all residential property thereby shifting a portion of the tax burden from lower value eligible residences to higher value residences as presented by Thom Berube, Town Assessor.*

*P. Kershaw motioned the Board on the recommendation of the Town Assessor to adopt a residential factor of one (1), seconded by G. Fowler. The Board took a roll call vote all in favor.*

**SMALL COMMERCIAL EXEMPTION:**

*The Board of Selectman may adopt an exemption of up to 10% to shift the Commercial Class tax burden from eligible parcels to ineligible parcels.*

*Eligible parcels valued at less than a million dollars and less than 10 employees.*

*The Board of Assessor's could not identify any properties that qualify for the small commercial exemption. Thom Berube, Town Assessor gave an example of the Town of Waltham.*

*No action taken.*

**OPEN SPACE DISCOUNT:**

*Thom Berube, Town Assessor spoke on this option that was put in place years ago, no parcels big enough to take part in this, Board of Assessors has determined the Town of Georgetown does not have any classified open space land the recommendation is to make no motion.*

*No Action taken.*

**SHIFTING THE TAX BURDEN:**

*Thom Berube, Town Assessor stated to the Board, the shift of tax burden from residential Class to commercial/ Industrial class is not recommended for communities with less than 15% CIP Value, Georgetown's is approximately 9%. Board of Assessors recommended no action be taken. No properties in Town qualify for this.*

*No Action taken.*

*D. Dawes asked for any public questions or concerns-none were asked.*

*G. Fowler motioned the Board to close the public hearing, seconded by A. Smith. Roll call vote taken all in favor.*

**UPDATE: Cultivauna (Levia) proposed sale to AYR Wellness: Matt Melander, Jim Moran and Lou Carter spoke on the following:**

- *Patented process was spoken about.*
- *Product stands for itself.*
- *Any future host agreement needs to be approved.*
- *23 employees are staying on with the team / new company, adding new staff.*
- *Massachusetts referred to as the little engine that could.*
- *Notification with any modifications would need to have Town Council approval.*
- *Cans used for product can and have increased.*
- *Any prior concerns from previous years regarding traffic problems have been all worked out.*
- *Production here in Georgetown*
- *#1 Product in liquid cannabis distribution / as of August,*
- *Future plans are to take product nationwide but needs a partner to accomplish this.*

- One million dollar in one month- for liquid cannabis/ Budweiser of Cannabis.
- Access to capital is key.

*D. Dawes asked about manufacturing in Georgetown new owners.*

*G. Fowler asked about marketing and is marketed as a seltzer product, and home sales only were questioned.*

*D. Twiss stated he has done a lot of research –what does AYR do for their premium product what product did they start with- AYRE is cannabis only – has multitudes of products, operates in eight states currently, best in class operators.*

*D. Dawes stated he has done some research and asked if asked AYR Wellness has currently 59 dispensaries, trying to get the size of AYR as it is today.*

*D, Dawes commented the Board of Selectman worked very hard to get this where the business is now, applauded the business and their hard work, has come a long way.*

*G. Fowler asked for a business card and a possibly tour of the facility in the future, asked who supplied their cans, used to work in this business, talked about storage of cans.*

*P. Kershaw congratulated the company and stated it was a great success story and asked for clarification on the current management staff and if they would still be place.*

*D. Twiss motioned the Board to approve the changes asked for by the Cultivauna (Levia) to be purchased by AYR Wellness with the caveat their lobbyist/ attorney / co-ordinates all documents and coordinates with the Town's attorneys as needed for changes to the Host agreement, seconded by G. Fowler. Roll call vote was taken all in favor.*

#### **VOTES BY THE BOARD:**

*D. Twiss motioned the Board to approve a one-day liquor license for the Friends of the GYCC / Regina Sadler to be used on October 23, 2021 from 7-10:30PM, G. Fowler seconded motion. Roll call vote was taken all in favor.*

*D. Twiss motioned the Board to approve the Town Administrator's recruitment interviews subject to Town Council approval, seconded by P. Kershaw. Roll call vote was taken all in favor.*

#### **TOWN ADMINISTRATORS REPORT, M. Farrell spoke on the following:**

- ARPA Funding update
- Next Finance Meeting update

**FIRE CHIEF SEARCH / UPDATE:**

*D. Twiss spoke on the acting Fire Chief Savage, and asked if the Board waits we will taking advantage of someone who is very generous, works 7 days a week, his offer to the Town is great, our obligation to get this going as soon as possible and on how much Chief Savage is appreciated, other towns are being paid higher, we need to identify our plan of action, recommendation of the panel was to go through a professional service to hire the next Fire Chief.*

*G. Fowler spoke on prior comments that have come during the budget process –it's difficult to criticize other boards when one Board gives one of their members a raise, we are increasing the Fire Department and we have not gone in front of the Finance Committee, we can't speak of other Boards for jumping ahead and then we do the same thing / difficult decision he will be the last to vote and will express his concerns. G. Fowler stated that maybe he can go along with the salary amount but he would like the wage study to be completed.*

*D. Twiss stated the panel reviewed the current new advertisement and suggested the salary go up to \$125-\$135K, the advertisement was modified slightly, panel reviewed the advertisement and shared with MR, suggested to look at what people are being paid in that position with a master's degree that is the going rate.*

*D. Dawes inquired if the panel has stated the that the money for this position is low.*

*G. Fowler asked if the advertisement for the position will have the proposed salary in it.*

*D. Dawes was hoping the Wage and Classification Study was done by now, needed to look at that to see if the Town is under paying for the Fire Chief Position.*

*D. Dawes thinks the Town should go through with MRI Consultants, Inc. to do the process, and stated that the Search Committee had a strong present in the selection process.*

*D. Twiss mentioned if the Town does not raise the salary, we are not going to get good candidates.*

*D. Twiss mentioned that the Acting Fire Chief Savage is currently working 7 days a week and does not want to stay for another 6 months he has another job.*

*G. Fowler motioned the Board to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the contract with MRI Inc consultants for the search for a new fire chief seconded by D. Twiss. Roll call vote was taken all in favor.*

**SELECTMAN'S REPORT:**

*P. Kershaw working and meeting on National Avenue making progress.*

*G. Fowler working on scheduling a Traffic Study Meeting but none scheduled as of yet.*

*A. Smith spoke of the Waste Reduction Committee.*

*D. Dawes stated there is a total of five (5) finalist for the Town Administrator's position and interviews will start this week.*

*Board discussed upcoming Meetings for the following dates -November 1<sup>st</sup> & 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and December 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021.*

*Board discussed the Town Hall Holiday scheduled-G. Fowler stated that normally the request would come from staff and could be discussed at a later meeting.*

*All Board of Selectman Meetings can be viewed on our Town Website at <https://www.georgetownma.gov> Under the Community TV tab on the left side.*

**ADJOURNMENT:**

*D. Twiss moved to adjourn with A. Smith seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken all in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:40PM. Minutes transcribed by Maureen Shultz*